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DEPT FOR T AND EUR/WE

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [MNUC](#) [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: PSI: FRENCH MFA RESPONSE TO U/S JOSEPH ON STATUS OF THE CORE GROUP

REF: STATE 118547

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, Reason 1
.4 B/D

1. (C) We delivered on June 24 the reftel letter from Undersecretary Joseph informing MFA Political Director Laboulaye of the U.S. wish to dissolve the PSI Core Group by June 30 through silence procedure. On June 30, Laboulaye's office conveyed to us his response for U/S Joseph, in which Laboulaye agrees that elimination of the Core Group could help ensure greater participation in PSI by non core group members and dispel any notion that there are different classes of contributors. Laboulaye suggests further consultations next week to determine how to make PSI coordination more effective and inclusive.

2. (C) Begin Text of letter (in English) dated June 29, 2005

Dear Bob,

I am grateful for your letter and to let me know the results of the review of the full range of Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) activities and future priorities by the United States Government. Since these questions imply an interagency review in Paris, we will let you know our position in the course of next week.

The PSI has enabled us to strengthen international cooperation to prevent the proliferation of WMD, their delivery systems, and related materials and to stop the flow of these items to and from states and non-state actors of proliferation concern. The PSI has proved to be very effective initiative to reinforce operational cooperations between partners in this field, and to demonstrate our commitment to interdict trafficking in weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, and related materials. Our objective should now focus on the strengthening of this initiative: how can we achieve broader support to the PSI and how can we achieve greater efficiency? We have stressed since the launching of this initiative that inclusiveness and the capacity to take on board countries willing and able to contribute would be key factors to its success.

We share your view that some countries have responded positively to our demarches to support the PSI, but consider that the PSI has two tiers of participation, and two classes of participants. This perception could be a political hurdle for some countries which could bring valuable contribution to this initiative. We must find a way to associate these countries to the PSI's activities and to do away with this perception. Eliminating the formal core-group could be a way to demonstrate to these countries that the PSI is not made up of different classes of participants.

However, eliminating the core-group raises two important issues: how best to ensure coordination among the countries which play a leading role in counter-proliferation worldwide and contribute the most to PSI? How best to ensure the effectiveness and the appropriate participation in the Operational Experts Group (OEG) in the new context?

In order to keep the focus on the operational character of this initiative, it is essential that countries contributing effectively to the activities of the PSI or in a position to participate in a concrete way, can foster exchanges of views and reinforce operational cooperations. We should find an appropriate way to conciliate inclusiveness and efficiency.

I look forward to hearing you back on this issue.

Sincerely,

/S/

Stanislas de Laboulaye

End text.

STAPLETON